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of 73b

T W O M I T E S: H 151 o

OR,
A GRATEFULL
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

OF
GOD's Singular Goodnesse.

In two Sermons

Preached by NATHANIELL HARDY,
Master of Arts, and Minister of the Gospel, in
S. Dionis Back-Church Aug: 7 and 14 1653.
Occasioned by his late unexpected Re-
covery of a desperate Sicknes.

I S A. 38. 17, 18, 19.

Behold for Peace, I had great bitterness, but thou hast in love to my soule, de-
livered it from the pit of corruption, for thou hast cast all my sinnes behinde
thy back.

For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee, they that go downe
into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

The living, The living, he shall praise thee, as I doe this day.

A U G. E P. 77. A D A U R E L:

Nam quid melius & animo geramus, & ore promamus, & calamo exprimamus,
quam Deo gratias, hoc nec dici brevius, nec audiri latius, nec intelligi gratius,
nec agi fructuofius potest.

L O N D O N,

Printed for Nath. Web, and Will: Grantham at the Black Beare
in St. Paul's Church-yard, neare the little
North Doore. 1653.

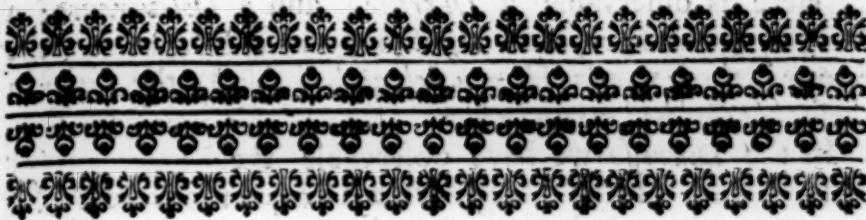
143 РЕДАКЦИЯ
ПОДГОТОВЛЕННАЯ
ДЛЯ ПЕЧАТИ ПОД НА

СОВЕТСКОМУ ПРАВУ
и для облегчения изучения и применения
в богословии, а также для
усвоения в богословии
и практике, а также для
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Phil. 2. 27. the former part.

*For indeed he was sick, nigh unto death,
but God had mercy on him.*



If you please to peruse the five last *Psalms* of *David*, you shall finde them beginning and ending with an *Hallelujah*: *Praise ye the Lord*, being the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *Prora* and the *Puppis*, the first and the last words of each. Not much unlike is *Saint Pauls* practise in the *Epistle* to the *Romans*, who almost in the very en-

1:8:11:16:24 :
Rom. 10:16,

trance placeth an *εὐχαέσσω*, *I thanke my God through Jesus Christ*, and closeth with a *θεῶ δόξα*, *To God onely wise bee glorie through Jesus Christ*. In imitation of these patternes I shall place *Thanksgiving*, both in the *Front* and *Reere* of my Discourse. Indeed what fitter *Proœmium* to a *gratulatorie Sermon* than a *Benedictus*? *Blessed therefore be God*, who kept his *unworthie Servant* from falling into the *Grave*, a *Land of Silence and Forgetfulness*, and hath now vouchsafed him the *libertie* of entring into his *House*, the *place* of *Prayers and Pryses*. *Blessed be God*, who hath brought my *feet* from *lying in a sick bed* to stand in this *holy Mount*. Finally *blessed be God*, who hath given me a *joyfull occasion* of *handling*, and *just cause* of *applying* this *Scripture* to *my selfe*, by changing the *third Person* unto the *first*; *For indeed I was sick nigh to death, but God had mercy on me.*

This *Text* naturally spreadeth forth it selfe into two maine

boughs, each of which have three branches sprouting from them.

Here is observable a *Distresse*, and a *Deliverance*; a *Danger*, and an *Escape*, an *Affliction*, and a *Liberation*: the former in those words, *He was sick nigh to death*; the latter in these, *but God had mercy on him*.

In the *Distresse* we have observable, the

1. *Quality* of the *Danger* what it was, in the word *Sick*.

2. *Extremity* of the *Measure*, how great it was, in those words *nigh unto death*.

3. *Eminency* of the *Person*, whom it befell, in the relative *hee*.

In the *Deliverance* we have considerable, the

1. *Efficiency* of the *Author*, by whom it was conferred, in the Word *God*.

2. The *excellency* of the *Benefit*, how expressed, in those words *had mercy on him*.

3. The *opportunity* of the *Time*, when vouchsafed, in the exceptive *but*.

These are the severall *Branches* of this Sacred *Tree*, into which I have climbed by the *Ladder* of humane industry, from which by the hand of *Divine assistance* I have gathered, and by the same hand shall now scatter among you such *Fruit* as hath refreshed my *owne*, and (I hope through Gods blessing) will nourish your *soules*; and so I begin with the

Gen. i.

Distresse, *He was sick nigh to death*; and therein the quality of the *danger* in that word *sick*.

The *Philosopher*, observing the *property* of mans *constitution*, describeth him by *risibile*, to be a reasonable living *Creature*, that hath the onely power of *laughing*; but the *Divine* considering the *misery* of mans *condition* no lesse, aptly char-

Vagiluq; locum *lugubri* *complet* *ut aquam' sit, cui* *tantum in vita* *restat transire* *malorum. Lucr.* *sterizeth* him by *flebile*, an unfortunate wretch, that hath the most cause of *weeping*: In this respect it is not unfitly taken notice of, how the new-born *Babe* commeth into the world crying, as if by the *language* of its present *tears*, it would fore-tell the *sadnesse* of its future *sorrowes*.

Among those many *evills* with which the *life* of man is beset, this of *sicknesse* is *one*.

Aug. in Ps. III *One to which all are subject, quis non agrotat in hac vita?* *quis*

quis languorem non experitur? nasci in hoc corpore mortali incipere agrotare est: Who in this life doth not more or lesse taste of sicknesse? yea from the Cradle to the Crutch, Birth to Death, Wombe to the Tombe, we are continually liable to it.

One of which we may say, as *Leah of Gad*, *A Troop* com- Gen. 30.11.
meth, and to which that *Devils name* in the *Gospel* may fitly Ma k 5.9.
be applyed *Legion*: The *Poet* instancing in one kind of *disease*,
speaketh of a *band* of *Feavers*,

Nova februum,

Horat. ed. 3.

Terris incubuit cohors :

Finally one which exceedeth all those other miseries of this $\chi\sigma\phi\sigma\sigma\gamma\mu\pi\tau$. present life, what dissention is in a City, discord in a Family, Pythag. Apo. surfeiting to the Stomach, ignorance to the Minde, that is in Iambl. sickness to the Body, disturbing and oppressing it; yea, it is $\chi\alpha\chi\mu\pi\gamma\tau\theta\alpha\mu\pi\tau$ the worst evill of cold, hunger, and nakednesse, of heat, thirst, $\tau\epsilon\chi\kappa\tau\sigma\alpha\tau\mu\pi\tau$ and warmnes, that they hasten upon us sickness and $\chi\beta\alpha\pi\mu\tau\alpha\tau\mu\pi\tau$ death. $\chi\alpha\chi\mu\pi\gamma\tau\theta\alpha\mu\pi\tau$ $\eta\pi\mu\pi\tau$

That I may the better open this *distresse*, give me leave to delineate it both in the effects that flow from it, and the cause from which it floweth.

There are two grievous attendants which sicknesse com-^{rov.} Greg.
monly bringeth along with her, namely paine and weaknesse; Naz. Orat.
by paine it taketh away the comfort of all enjoyments, even 16.
of life it selfe; Barzillai being old, said to the King, *Can thy* ^{2 Sam 19.35.} *Servant taste what I eat, or what I drink? Can I heare any* ^{Tria bac in omni} *more the voice of singing men, and singing women? wherfore* ^{morbo gravia} *should thy servant be a burden to my Lord the King? Not* ^{sunt, mesus m-} *much unlike may it be said of the sick man, Can he eat, or can intermissio vo-*
be drinke? Can musick, or any other pleasures then delight him, ^{is, dolor corporis,} *lupitatis.*

when he is a burthen to himselfe? And as by reason of paine, it renderth life uncomfortable, so by reason of *weaknesse*, *unserviceable*, disenabling the body from the performance of any work: Alas, how can the *Clock* go when the *Weights* are plucked off? or the *watch* move right, when the *wheels* are out of order?

Both these sad effects are fitly expressed by two words, the one in the *Hebrew*, the other in the *Greek* tongue, and it is the *word* which our *Apostle* here useth. The *Hebrew* word-- וָיַן signifieth both *dolnit* and *agrotavit*, to be *sick*, and to be *sorry*: well are they expressed by one word, since they commonly go together, both smarting *paine* in the *Body*, and dolorous *anguish* in the *Mind* being caused by *sicknesse*; in this respect the *English* word *disease*, is very *apposite*, because it *diseaseth* and *disturbeth* the person; of this *David* complained in his *sicknesse*, when he saith, *My bones are vexed, and my soule is also sore vexed*. The *Greek* word αἰδίω implyeth both *agrotari*, and *imbecillemeſſe*, to be *sick*, and to be *weak*, and therefore the *Noun* of this *Verbe* is elsewhere rendred *infirmity*: this inconvenience likewise *David* found by his *disease*, when he said, *I am feeble, and sore broken*; *weaknes* being the inseparable concomitant of *sicknes*.

Pſal. 6.2,3.

Proko: 13:11

Mat. 9.17.

Pſal. 38.8.

Quando hac
iam grandis
faciat vicino
jam exitu, etiam
a medicerium
actione exclusus
fascidente jam
corpore ubi exer-
cabit diffidio-
nis officium cen-
sor animus
Salv. ad Eccl.
Cathol. 1.1.
Iam. 5.

Meditations, w^{ch} (I would to God) were more deeply imprinted on the mindes of men, thosse especially, who put off their *repentance*, and the *working out* of their *salvation* till a *sick bed*, as if when they are in *pain*, they could *repent* with the more *ease*, or when they are *weakest*, they were *strong* enough for this *work*: Alas, doe you not know how *unfit* such a time is for *any*, but much more a *religious* employment? This no doubt is one reason why *Saint James*, who in other *afflictions* adviseth men to *pray* for themselves, in *sicknesse* counselleth them to *call for the Elders of the Church to pray* over them, because then for the most part they are *unable* to *pray* themselves: in this respect it was (as I have read) the saying of a *virtuous Gentlewoman* upon her *sick bed*, *Let none defer their preparation nor their prayers unto the bed of their sicknesse*, for then the minde is too much troubled with *grief* of body to be employed, as they ought, in *spiritual exercise*. Tell me, whoever thou art that delayest till this time, how knowest thou, but such a *sicknes* may seize upon thee

Langhorn's fun.
Serm. of M^s Mary Swaine.

thee as in a moment, may take away thy life ? or if not, be- *Quia deus non
reave thee of thy senses ? or it may be so painfull, that it is all irridetur, ipse
thou canst do to wrestle with the paine ; nay, let me tell thee, se decepit qui
for the most part such procrastinators, when that time com- mortem multe
meth, either repent not at all in their sicknesse, or it proveth temporibus vixit
but a sickly repentance. Oh then (my Brethren !) be wise ad queren-
in time, doe not lay the greatest load on the feeblest horse, dan vitam se-
put not the weakest servant to the hardest labour, put not mivibus assurgit
off the maine busynesse of thy soules health to the dolefull time & tunc offici-
of thy bodies sicknesse. o, ne appetet
quando domini-
ca servitutis*

You have heard what sicknesse doth, or rather undoeth ; it omnia corporis
would not be amisse to enquire whence it came, and how it was & anima sub-
brought into the world. Indeed (as Christ faith in another tribuntur officia.
case) it was not so from the beginning. Man in innocency was Fault. Epist.
created with a body of so equall and lasting a temperature, that prima.
(had he not sinned) it had neither been taken downe by death, Mat. 19. 8.
nor put out of frame by sicknesse. Sinne it is which is fons Ma- mines velins pre-
li, morbi, mortis, hath brought in evill instead of good, death of videntiam in fine
life, and sicknesse of health. The Physician being asked the virtutis sua ac-
cause of Diseases, answereth, and most truly, mali humores, cipere, vix pau-
evill humors in the body. But the Divine resolveth it more secundum quod
fully, mali mores, ill manners in the life. Phylosophy teacheth, desiderant adi-
and Experience confirmeth it, that passiones animae sequuntur pisci. Elig. de
temperamentum corporis, the mindes passions much follow the can. dom. bom.
bodyes temper. Divinity preacheth no lesse truly, that the dis-
order of the body followeth upon the distemper of the minde ;
Mans soule was first sick of sinne, and so the body becommeth
infected with sicknesse for sinne. It was the first sinne of Adam
which brought forth, and it is our owne actuall sinnes that
nourish this degenerate Bras, wherewith mankinde is so miserably infested.

A Meditation, which (if well pondered) would learne us to
bear sicknesse whensoever it commeth upon us without mur-
muring, and yet with mourning.

1. Why shouldst thou repine at God when any disease seizeth Nibil est quod
one thee ? True, he is the efficient, but thou art the meritori- de calamitatibus
ous cause ; he inflicteth, but it is sinne that deserveth ; he puni- nostris Deo im-
sibeth, but it is not till thou hast provoked him, blame not his pucare possumus,
no calamitatum justice,

nostrarum au-
tores sumus.

Salv.de Gub. l. 8
et Deo punimur
sed ipsi facimus
ut puniamur.

id ibid.

Jerem. 4.18.

Gr. Naz Epist
70.

justice, but thank thy owne wickednesse, the Moth that frets the garment is bred of it ; the Tree giveth life to that Worme which killeth it. Thy sicknesse, oh man, is of thy selfe, and thy owne wayes and doings are they which procure these things to thee.

2. When sicknesse smiteth thy body, let repentance smite thy thigh; when the disease rageth in thy members, let thy soule be angry at thy sinne, and as thou complaineſt of the effect, ſo labor to be ſensible of the cauſe: *νόσος ταῦτα γάγγια τρέπεται τὸ σωματικὸν* faith the Divine excellently, ſicknesſe is an wholsome Discipline, it is ſo when it teacheth us to know our folly. Happy disease which openeth our eyes at once to ſee, and weep for our ſinnes ; *Oh my soule, it is ſinne hath cauſed thy body to feele ſicknesſe, let ſicknesſe cauſe thee to feele the weight of ſinne ; it is wickednesſe hath brought this weaknesſe, let this weaknesſe bring thee to a ſight and ſense of thy wickednesſe, why ſhouldſt thou hold that ſword in thy hand, which hath ſo ſorely wounded it ? or hang that ſerpent in thy boſome, which hath ſo painfully ſtung thee ? rather ſince the fruit is ſo bitter, pluck up the root, and let not ſin neigne any longer in thy mortal body, ſeeing it hath made thy body ſo mortall. And ſo much for the quality of the danger : I paſs on to the Extremity of the measure, nigh unto death.*

Mortem omni-
terari commu-
nem eſſe ſentio.
Cic. de Senect.
tunc trepidamus
cum prope a vo-
bis credimus eſſe
mortem, a quo
prope non eſt
parata omnibus
locis omnibus-
que nomina. *Sen Epift 30.*
Tres ſunt num-
rii mortis, caſu,
infirmitas, ſe-
nilitas, caſus
moriens moriem haffen to death.

lacerem, infirmius appo-entem, Jeſuſtus praſentem. Hugo de S. viii. de clauſ. Ab.

As for old men, they are so nigh to death, that the Proverbe Nihil habet
faith, they have one foot in the grave, young men may dye soon, *quod speret*
but they cannot live long; the dimnesse of light in their eyes, *quem senectus*
and vapours that sometimes are drawne up into their braines, *duit ad mortem*
argue the Sun of their life to be setting, the hoary frost, or *Quemadmodum*
rather white snow upon their heads, proclaiimes that the winter *senectus adole-*
of their deaths is approaching. The more strange it is to see *scensiam si qui-*
them doting on, who are going out of the world, and as if they *tur, ita mors se-*
could set up under ground, *neglectum. i. ibid* their mindes are most earthly whilst *pederentim mo-*
their bodies are ready to drop into the earth: the more sad it rior dixit Ale-
is to think how both unwilling and unfit they are to die, who *xi. senex leue*
yet are so unlikely to live; and as if with the *Eagle* they could *insedens.*
renew their youth, they flatter themselves in hope of life, when *Charon me mo-*
yet they are as it were within sight of death; how short are *mordit dixit*
such men of that heathen Seneca, who said of himselfe, *ante se- pro cane, innu-*
neglectum curavi bene vivere, in senectute bene mori, my care *ens senectutem*
in youth was to live, but in old age to die well, then no doubt *morti vicinam.*
perceiving his death to be at hand. *Erasm. Apoth.*

16. & 8.

As old men, be they never so well, so sick men, by they ne- *τὸς ζῆν γὰρ*
ver so young, are nigh to death; what Anacharsis said of *Sea- ὁ δέεσθαις οὐ γένε-*
men, that he knew not whether to reckon them among the *έγενονται οὐ γένονται*
living or the dead, is no lesse true of sick men, who indeed are *Crat.*
not dead, because they breath, and yet not living because not *Antiph.*
lusty; every man carrieth death in his besome, but the sick man *Fuvenibus in-*
at his backe, or rather in his armes before his face. *certus bujus vi-*
ta terminus in-

In summe there is a three-fold propinquity of death, possible, *τας, senibus*
probable, certaine; it is possible the healthiest, strongest, and *vero caneth*
youngest may dye quickly; it is certaine old men (though they *maturior ex*
out-live far younger) cannot live long; and it is probable that *hac luce exitus*
the sick mans death is at hand. *breviter concor-*
det Cypr. de

But yet this in the proper sense is not true of all sicknesse, *τὸς οὐδὲν γέγονε*
that distinction of sinne cannot hold in Divinity, according to *ἰσωληδοῖς πό-*
the Popish acceptation, that some are *veniall*, others *mortal*, *τέρας πλεῖς*
since S. Paul faith indefinitely, and meaneth it uiniversally, that *εἰσιν δι ζῶντος*
death is the wages of sin, but Analogically it is true in *Physick* of *τὸς οὐδὲν γέγονε*
diseases; some are onely painfull, others mortal, the Gout in *τὸν τοῦ πόδον*
the Toe, a pain in the Teeth, a prick in the Finger; these, *πλανίοτες τὸ*
though they cause pain, yet are not in their owne nature dead-*τίθηνται*.

ly, Diog laert. l. 1.

ly, nor is the patient accounted the neerer death for them.

Besides, of mortall diseases there is a difference, some are a long time untwisting, others in a short time cut asunder the thread of life: thus the *Dropſie* is a great while in drowning, the *Palsie* in shaking downe, and the *Consumption* in drying up the body, whilst the *Feaver* in a few dayes burneth, and an *Apoplexie*, or *Apoſteme* in a few houres ſuffocateth it.

And yet once more in violent diseases, there is a difference, we do not ſay of every man whom a *Feaver* ſmiteth, that he

impervide *ā* *te*
lateōv *ter-*
vai ēte *deē-*
peia *πᾶσα*
περαγγελίν. Such, no doubt, was *Epaphroditus* his case, for though

C. Naz. Orat. some conceive this danger might arise from stripes and scourges, which *Nero* ſhould command to be inflicted on him at

Forſitan quia *verberatus* *effab* *Rome*, yet it is more rationally and generally concluded, that *infidelibus in* *minifterio.* *Anſelm.* in loc. *Ch yſlost.* in v. 29.

ſome violent ſickneſſe, by reaſon of a long tourney, had ſeized upon him; and though it is likely this good man was not negligent (according as ability and opportunity was afforded) to uſe meaneſ, yet the disease did ſo increase, that as to life his condition was deſperate, and therefore *S. Paul* ſaith of him he was nigh unto death.

Humana fru-
tuauis nimia in
preſperis rebus
oblivio eſt.
Qu. Curt. l. 4.

To this low and weake estate is God pleased many times to

bring men among others, chiefly for a double end, and that he may minde them of thei rdifſolution, and quicken them in their devotion.

Ira nūv̄ dōs
ris ādeveſias
nūv̄ āπομ-
νήματα.
Greg. Naz.

Of all things we are very prone to forget our latter end, and therefore God by ſickneſſe puts us in minde of it, we are apt to put death farre from us, and therefore by ſome grievous disease God bringeth us nigh to death; a presumption, we ſhall not dye yet, maketh us not think of dying at all, and whileſt marrow is in our bones, colour in our faces, appetite in our ſtomachs, ſtrength in our joyns, health in our bodyes, we eaſily perſuade our ſelves we ſhall not dye yet; no mervaile, if to fixe our eyes upon the *Grave*, God chafthen us with paine upon our *Bed*, ſo that

that our life abhorreth bread, our flesh consumeth away, and our soule draweth neare to the grave. It was the confession of Alexander, when let blood with an arrow: All men call me Jupiters Sonne, but this wound proclaims me a mortall man: and yet more divine was that of Antigonus, who acknowledged his disease to be sent as a Monitor, lest otherwise he might have growne insolent through the forgetfulness of mortality. Sicknesse especially, when desperate, are warning peices to tell us the murdering peice of death is ready to destroy, every ach tolls the Bell, but these, as it were, dig the grave, and cry 'Artiyor dust to dust; and good reason it is, that when we cast the thought of death behinde our backs, death it selfe should by these diseases looke us in the face, and as it were, pluck us by the throat.

2. In health we are no lesse apt to forget God than our selves, but sicknesse mindeth us of him, in prosperity perhaps we mumble over a Pater Noster, but adversity teacheth us to cry Abba Father: Lord, faith the Prophet, in trouble have they visited thee, they who before were strangers, now would bee familiar with God, and give him a visit; they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them, it may be before they did say a prayer, but now they poure out a prayer.

15. 26, 16.

Though man by the formation of his body be made with an erect countenance, yet he seldome looks up to heaven till some disease hath laid him upon his back; nor yet many times will a slight sicknesse preuale: God promiseth himselfe concerning his people, in their affliction they will seeke me early, but for the most part it proveth otherwise; ubi desinit medicus, ibi incipit Theologus, the Divine's work begins not with many till the Physician's is done, it is late enough not to seeke God till affliction comes, and yet we seeke God not early, but late in affliction. The Woman in the Gospele sick of a bloudy Issue, goeth not to Christ till she had spent all (and that to no purpose) upon Physicians, the Prodigall thinketh not of going home to his Father, till he is brought so low, that he would faine be fed with husks, but cannot get them: nor doe many lift up their eyes or hands to heaven, till they are scarce able to lift up either. Indeed necessity is an excellent Mistris, especi- ally

ally of Devotion: Most men will not pray till they must, it is misery, which like Jonahs fish, puts them upon humble supplication, who never thought of God under the gourd of Prosperity. In which respect, that *Latine Proverb* was not taken up without just cause, *Qui nescit orare, discat navigare*; he that knoweth not how to pray, let him turne *Mariner*: and no doubt those violent stormes, which make the *Seas to roare*, will teach him to pray. When those young *Perſian gallants* being beaten and pursued by their enemies, came to the River *Strymon*, which was so frozen that their *Boats* could not launch, and yet it began to thaw, so that they feared the *Ice* would not bear them, then (though the day before they reviled both God and his providence) most timorously they fall upon their faces, and ardently beg of God that the *River* might bear them over from their enemyes pursuit. The smart lasses of Gods rod drive them home, and draw them neare to him, who before were farre from him.

Dr. Jer. Tay.
Sermon.

τι εἰσὶν ἐν βασισταῖς ἐν ἀπλόσ φύσιν, σῶμα σώματος, εἰδὲ περ τῆς γλώσσης, ἀλλα καρδίας, τοιαύταις
The Greekes aptly expresse the declining estate of a Kingdome by *πτοεῖν εἰς γόνην* falling upon the Knee, and its ruined estate by *πτοεῖν εἰς σόμα* falling upon the Mouth; expressions, which though they principally referre to the condition, yet withall intimate the disposition of men in an afflicted condition, they whose knees in health were like *Elephants*, without joyns, could not, or rather would not bend, in sicknesse fall upon their knees, nay, when nigh to death, fall upon their mouthes in humble adoration and earnest invocation upon God. And for these causes, that men may both looke forward to their end, and upward to their God; he is pleased to bring them downward, almost to the Gates of Death, and Chambers of the Grave.

ψυχαὶ καὶ κυρταὶ. Chrys. in Psal. 129. κάρυσσα ψυχὴ εἰς ψυχούς. Greg. Naz. Orat.

17.

To end this, let us all make account of, and prepare for straights. In health, expect sicknesse, in sicknesse looke for death, or to be brought nigh to it. Diseases may come unsent for, let them not come unlooked for; if they happen not, thou art not the worse, and it is labour well lost; if they doe, thou art the better fitted, and it is time well spent. Doe not flatter thy selfe in health, as if the mountaine of thy body were so strong that it could not be moved: Alas, one blast from heaven can-

not

not onely move, but remove, shake, but overturne it, rather even then when thou art fed with fat pastures, cleare waters, thy Table spread, thy Cap full, thy Body hayle, often thinke of walking through the valley of the shadow of death: Happy is Psal. 23. 4. that man, whom when sicknesse arresteth, and death approacheth to, can say, and say it truly, *This is no more then what I have looked and provided for all my dayes.* And so much be spoken of the second particular, passe we now to the third.

3. Eminency of the person, whom this extreame disease befell in the relative *He*. If you would know who this *He* was, be pleased to cast your eyes on the 25. verse of the Chapter, where you finde his name to be *Epaphroditus*, one that was not onely a good Man, but a *Man of God*, not onely a *Servant*, but a *Minister of Christ*, and one so eminent, as that Saint *Paul* dignifies him with the titles of his *Brother*, and *Companion*, and *fellow-Souldier*; and yet of him it is here said that he was nigh unto death.

Ver. 25.

Ibid.

Saints as well as sinners, Ministers as well as the People, are liable to desperate diseases. In respect of temporall evills they have no more priviledge than others: And no wonder, since

1. That which is the cause both of sicknesse and death, remaineth in them, to wit, sinne: Indeed the power of sinne is weakened, therefore they cannot be hurt of the second death, but the being of it remaineth, and that necessitateth the first; they are so freed from the guilt of it, that they shall not taste the torments of hell, but yet they may drinke deepe of the miseries of this life: sinne will not leave the best man till it hath brought him to his grave, well may it bring him to his sick bed.

Peccatum separans inter nos & Deum penitus auferri non posset, donec liberetur a corpore.
Bern. de 3. in adv. Serm. 6.

2. In respect of their bodily constitution, they are earthly houses, that will moulder away, till at last they fall: earthen vessels subject to flames and cracks, till at length they breake. The Saints are the Sonnes of God by grace, but still the Sonnes of Adam by nature, the Ministers are Angels in respect of their office, but still they are Men in regard of their persons, and being of the same mould, and subject to the same dangers with others.

3. More specially, the very calling and employment of Ministers is such, as exhausteth their spiriss, weakeneth their bodyes, and accelerateth both diseases and death: our Apostle saith of Epaphrodit. that for the work of Christ he was nigh to death; v. 30. the worke he there meaneth is most probably conceived to be the travelling of this good man to Rome, with supplyes for his wants, (to relieve a Christian, especially a Messenger of Christ, is the work of Christ) but it is no lesse true of the worke of Christ, which is peculiarly the Ministers, since the pains they take in preaching, oft times Christ brings them nigh to death. It was said of Archimedes, studiis quibus obtinuit famam amisit vitam, the studies which got him credit lost his life; and it may be said of many Ministers, the fastings, watchings, labours do evangelio, in preachings, by which they profit the peoples soules, hurt their defendenda mā bodyes. Thus like the candle they waste themselves that they canā, in vigiliū might enlighten, yea, like the salt they dissolve themselves that they may season others.

zionibus, &c.

Aret. ibid.

τι θαύμασον

εἰ κακοπαθε-

σι καὶ ἀγροι,

εἴτε εἰς κα-

θάρσον, εἴτε

εἰς βασάνον,

ἀρετῆς καὶ πε-

ρεγοφίας. Greg.

Naz. Orat.

19.

1 Cor. 11. 30.

2 Cor. 12. 7.

εἴτε ἀγαθός,

τις δὲ χειρίς

ἀμαρτίας, εἴτε

κακός τις

χειρίς δικαι-

ούσιος, αὔτο-

τέργος δὲ ἀ-

4. Finally, God hath choice and singular ends at which he aimeth, when he bringeth his owne Servants or Ministers into such desperate sicknesses, and that both, in regard of sinne and grace.

1. In regard of their sinnes, that they may be either purged or prevented, by which means their sicknesse becomes their Physike, and the Malady it selfe a spirituall remedy. It may be they have fallen into some grosse sinne, and therefore they fall into some grievous sickness: So was it with those unworthy Communicants, concerning whom Saint Paul saith, for which cause many of them were weake, many sick, and some slept. It may be God seeth them prone to commit some hainous fault which he restraineth them from by some dolorous sicknesse, as S. Paul had a prick in his flesh that he might not be puffed up in his minde; so God sometimes wounds his Servants bodyes, as knowing, that otherwise they would have wounded their consciences.

2. In respect of their graces, that the truth of them may be tried, the acts of them renewed, and the strength of them increased. God hath many wayes to try men, among which sickness, especially if dangerous, is a sore tryall, and therefore when

when the Devil, by Gods leave had tryed Job in the losse of his Carrell, Servants, and Children, he obtaineth licence to *τιθοτις* i.e. inflict sores upon his body, making this his *last* (as accounting *ν. τις δε κατ* his fiercest) onset. Indeed then is the triall of a mans faith, *λόγος καὶ φαντος* when God seemeth as if he would slay him, of his hope when all *εργάσιται τις* things are desperate, of his love when God frowneth upon, nay *καὶ νοσον μη* beateth him, of his patience when the paine is sharp, of his *δογμαδηνός* courage when the sorrowes of death compasse him, of his perse- *καταβολής* *τις* verance, when he holds fast his integrity to the death. *de Morb. & Med.*

To close up this, let it be a lesson of comfort, of charity, and *Quodam pre-
sens Deus pec-
care posse, in sa-*

1. Of comfort, when any sicknesse seizeth on thee, remem- *hanc flagellat*
ber whose lot it hath been as well as thine, and be not discoura- *eos infirmitate*
ged. When Christ would encourage his Disciples against suf- *corporis, ne pec-
ferings, he useth this argument, for so persecuted they the Prophets cent: us eti u-
which were before you: Mat. 5.12 it is that meditation which may *tutius sit frangi*
revive us when we are in pain and misery, so it fared with others *languoribus ad*
of Gods faithfull ones before me. That argument of Elijah indeed *remare in o-
was somewhat passionate, 1 King. 19.4. It is enough now, O Lord, *lumes ad dam-
take away my life, for I am not better than my Fathers; but it is a* *natiorem Bern.*
pious reasoning for every Christian to say, I am content Lord, if *de Int. Dom.*
thou take away my health, exercise me with diseases, I am not *cap. 46.*
better than Job, David, Hezekiah, Epaphroditus, and others *Probationes di-
of thy faithfull Servants and Ministers; who am I, that I should* *versa sunt cre-
think much to pledge those holy men of God, though in a bitter* *dentium, alius*
Cup? *por agritudi-
new, alius amis-
fione barorum,*
alius per damum
*pecuniae proba-
tur. Ambr. in*
*Loc.***

2. Of Charity, and that both to thy selfe and others.

1. Condemne not thy selfe as if God hated thee, because he *τοτε αὐτοσια*
corrects thee, or as if he were more angry with thee than others, *πεινάσσων*
because he chastiseth thee more severely then them. Indeed it *αὐτογενε αγ-
is good in a time of sicknesse to reflect upon thy selfe, examine *αυνίδητι τη*
thy wayes, and if conscience accuse of some great misdemeanour, to humble thy selfe, and acknowledge thy *σωματος τη*
reward of thy offence, but otherwise, do not conclude thy *τωβ, καὶ της*
owne guilt or Gods hatred merely from the premisses of sick- *άγιας οἰκείων*
nesse, though virulent.*

2. Censure not others as if they were therefore the worst of *σαρκάς.*
sinners, because in their bodyes the greatest sufferers. This is *Chrys. T. 7. de*
(indeed) Morb. & Med.

A& 28.4.

Psal. 38.13.

Quam prae-
scurum judicium
corum qui ex-
varicis mali, qui-
bus nonnulli
magui viri &
doctores ecclesie
laborare non-
nunquam solent,
finistre de illo-
rum doctrina
et salutem judi-
care. Zanch in
Loc.

Eccle 1.9. 2.

Psal. 91.10.

Ver. 9.

(indeed) that hard measure which Gods people and Ministers often meet with: When the Barbarians saw a Viper upon Paul's hand, they presently condemned him as a murtherer; and David complaineth of his enemies, that when he was sick, they spake mischievous things against him: nay Job's friends (though good men) were deceived with this fallacy, and accuse Job of hypocrisy because of his calamity. And thus it is still, If a zealous Christian, or faithfull Minister be visited with a dolefull sicknesse, his Religion must be no better than *Dissimulation*, and his *Doctrine Heresie*: But surely it is either *Ignorance*, or *Malice*, or both, that filleth mens mouthes with such censures.

It is true, there never was sicknesse without sinne, but the sicknesse is not alwayes proportioned to the sinne: these things come alike to all, was the wise mans Observation, nor doth any sicknesse befall any man which may not befall the best man. I know some assert a Saint to be *Plague-free*, grounding it upon the Promise in the *Psalme*, that *no plague shall come nigh his dwelling*: But you must know, this is onely a *temporall Promise*, and therefore (as indeed all such) hath a *double condition annexed unto it*. The one *ex parte persona*, on the *Saints part*, which is to *make the Lord, even the most high, his habitation*; if then good men, in pestilentiall times, through a distrustfull feare, make the *Creatures* their *refuge*, no mervaile if the *plague infect them and their dwellings*. The other *ex parte rei*, in regard of the *thing it selfe*, which is onely *assured so far as it may make for Gods glory and his Peoples benefit*. We read in the former part of the tenth verse *there shall no evill befall him*, whereby is intimated that the *plague shall not then come nigh to*, when it is *evill for a good man*, but if at any time *God see it good*, either for the *manifestation of his owne glory* (to wit, of his *justice* in so severely *punishing his owne*, of his *power* and *mercy* in *delivering from so deadly a disease*) or for the *spirituall advantage* of his *people* (in *humbling them for some scandalous sinne* by so *smart a chafisement*, in *exercising the strength of their patience* by so *sore a tryall*) *nor the holiest person is in such cases exempted from the plague*, nor is it *improbably conceived* that *Job's botches, Hezekiah's boyles*

boyles, Davids sores were not much different from, if not altogether the same with the plague, who yet all of them were choice and eminent Saints. Oh then, let us take heed how we lay the load of heavy censure upon the backs of Gods Ministers and Servants.

3. Of diligence, that

1. We who are Ministers, improve the time of our health in feeding the flocks of Christ, since when sicknesse cometh, we shall be disenabled from our employments: nay perhaps we that have taught others, may then have need to learne our selves.

You who are the People, get all the good you can from us, whilst we are in a capacity of doing good to you, ere long the Candle of our lives may burne dimme by reason of some sicknesse, yea, be blowne out by death; and then we can no longer give light unto you. Oh therefore walke in the light while you have it, be willing to learne while we are able to teach, account our labours precious, and let them be profitable to you, whilst God maketh us able to bestow them among you, which we shall not be, when that befalls us which did Epaphroditus in the Text, to be sick nigh unto death: And so I have given a dispatch to the first generall, namely the distresse: I now proceed to

2. The deliverance, and therein the

Gen. part.

1. Efficiency of the Author, God. Indeed both life and death, health and sickness, are in Gods hand: That of the Poet,

Una eademq; manus vulnus opeaq; tulit.

may in this respect be fitly made use of; the same hand of Divine Providence is that which maketh and closeth the wound: He killeth, and maketh alive, he bringeth downe to the grave, and bringeth up, so singeth Hannah. I forme light, and create darkness, I make peace, and create evil, I the Lord doe all these things, is Gods owne saying by the Prophet. Thy head cannot abe without his leave, nor leave aking without his help; but though both are from him, yet with some difference. Of sicknes, he is onely the efficient, sinne is the meritorious cause. Of health he is so the efficient, as that his mercy is the impulsive cause, for which reason perhaps it is here said, God had mercy; that which

Ovid.

1 Sam. 2. 6:

Is. 45. 7.

which moveth him is his pity, and that which helpeth us is his power.

*sunt aliqua me-
dia divina pro-
videntia, non
proper defallum
sua virtutis, sed
proper abundan-
tiam sua bonita-
tis, ut dignita-
tem causalitatis
estiam creaturis
communicet.*

True it is, God is for the most part pleased to make use of meanes in effecting health, but this ariseth from the greatnesse of his goodnessse, not any defect in his Almighainesse, as Aquinas pithily.

That he needeth not meanes, appeareth in as much as he sometimes worketh without any. Such were the Cures Christ wrought upon Peters Wives Mother, the Centurions Servant, and the Impotent Cripple, whom his Word onely restored to health. Nay many times the meanes he useth are improbable, yea, of their owne nature apt to produce a contrary effect. What vertue could there be in the waters of Jordan to Luk. 4. 3. 8. 7. 10. cleanse Naamans leprosie? or in the lump of figgs to heale John 5. 8. 9. Hezekiah's sores? yea, the Spittle and Clay which Christ made use of, were more likely to put out a seeing, than recover a blinde mans eyes.

*Aquin. part 1. q. 10. art 3.
2 Kings 5. 14.
Isa. 38. 21.
John 9. 6.*

He standeth not in need of meanes; but the most probable meanes stand in need of him. It is to put honour on the creature that God vouchsafeth to use it as an instrument; and when the creature becometh an instrument of any good, it is onely as in the hand of God, working with, and by it. For, tell me, when any are recovered, who is it that put the medicinall quality into the drugs which heale them, but the God of Nature? who giveth that wit and skill to man which findeth out their qualities, and accordingly maketh use of them, but the God of Knowledge? Finally, who is it that commands a blessing upon, and giveth successse to the meanes, but the God of Power? *Man liveth not by bread onely, nor is the Patient cured by Physick onely, or chiefly, it is a word proceeding from the mouth of God that maketh the one effectuall for continuation, and the other for restauration of health.*

Mat. 4. 4.

To apply this in a three-fold admonition:

1. Art thou wicked? As thou desirest health to be preserved, or renewed, make thy peace with God by repentance: it is the ground upon which the Jewish Converts mutually exhort each other to this duty, *Come let us returne unto the Lord, for he hath torne, and he will heale us, he hath smitten, and he will bind*

Mol. 6. 1.

bindes us up, though it be that indeed, which God out of his Philanthropie sometimes vouchsafeth, yet it is a fond presumption for any to expect that he should be a Physitian to them who are enemies to him. Me thinks an ungodly wretch should imagine that God speaketh to him in the words of the Prophet, *when thou cryest let thy companions deliver thee*; or, as he saith to the children of Israel, when they committed Idolatry, *Goe and cry unto the Gods which you have chosen*, the lusts which you have served, *let them deliver you in the time of our tribulation*. Had that accusation of Rabsakeb been true, his argumentation was solid, when he sent that message to Hezekiah, *But if thou say to me, we trust in the Lord our God, is it not hee, whose high Places, and whose Altars Hezekiah hath taken away?* And surely the conscience of a wicked man (if not seared) cannot but check him in the like expressions, *Wilt thou say I trust in God for health, or recovery?* Is it not he whose Name thou hast blasphemed, Patience thou hast abused, and Worship thou hast neglected? Be wise therefore, oh ye sinners, and instructed ye wicked of the earth! make him your friend who must be your refuge, offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and then, not till then, put your trust in the Lord. Your life, your health is in his hands; looke that your doings be right, and then your persons shall bee precious in his eyes.

2. Art thou sick? learne whom to invocate, and on whom to depend for health, upon no other than God.

Far be it from any of us in sicknesse (with Saul in danger) to run to the Pythonise, and seek help of the Devill. Satans best cures are deadly wounds; it is far better to continue sick, then by such meanes to get health. Since whilst thy mortall body is for a time restored, thy immortall soule is desperately endangered.

Nor yet let us with the Papists seeke to any Saints as Mediatours with God for our recovery. Whilst They have their severall Saints for severall Diseases; Sebastian for the Plague, Anthony for the Gangreen, Patronilla for Agues, and Benedict for the Stone: Let us have recourse to the one God in all Diseases. Whilst they thinke it too great sauciness to be

*Creatorem nobis
propitium redda-
mus, qui potens
est nostrum mor-
bis affligere, tum
sanare.*

*Ephr. de vir.
spirit. T. 1.
Ili. 57. 13.
Judges 10. 14.
Ilay 36. 7.*

*το το δε ι μι-
κηρ. αγετι το
επ αυτω θαρ-
ρειν, κη επ α-
τω πεποιθε-
ναι μετα δε
της δικαιο-
σιν. Chrys.
in Psal. 4. 6.*

*βελτιον ιν
ταις αδρεσι-
αις μετα ι
δια την α-
παλλαγην
της αδειας
εις ασεβειαν
καταπεσειν
και γαρ θε-
εαπεινον γόνις
μειζον κατι-
βλαψην ι
αφελησην.*

*Chrys. T. 7.
de Morb. &
Med.*

be their owne spokes-men to God ; and therefore go to *saint* *somebody* to preferre their Petitions for them : let us hold it the best manners to go our selves of our *owne* errands to God, not doubting but that he, who bids us *come*, will bid us *welcome*.

2 Chron. 16.12. Finally, let us not tread in *Asa*'s foot-steps, who *sought not to the Lord, but to the Physitians* ; nor yet let us tread *Antipodes* to him in *seeking to the Lord, and not to the Physitians*, whilst he affords them : but as *Gideon* commanded his *Soldiers* to cry, *the sword of the Lord, and of Gideon* ; so let us ever say, *the blessing of the Lord, and the skill of the Physitian*. Indeed where *opportunity* is vouchsafed, those *two* must *not* be severed. God will not *usually* help *without meanes*, and therefore they must be *used* ; the *meanes* cannot *possibly* help *without God* ; and therefore in the *use* of them his *blessing* must be *implored*. They are *equally* bad to *neglect* and to *rest* on *second causes*, to expect *succour* either from them *originally*, or *without them instrumentally*, to rely on *God without meanes*, or trust to *meanes without God*. Surely, what the *King* said to

2 Kings. 6.27. the *woman*, *If the Lord doe not help thee, whence shall I help thee* ? that all *creatures* say to us in any *distresse*, *If the Lord help not, whence shall we* ? except the *Lord build the house*, they labour in *vaine* that build it ; except the *Lord keep the City*, the *watchman* watcheth but in *vain*, saith the *Psalmist*. Indeed he doth not say *quia*, because the *Lord buildes the house*, but *nisi*, as excluding *humane* *diligence* : but except the *Lord build*, thereby including *divine* *providence* : nor doth he onely say, *nisi dominus consenserit, adjuverit*, but *nisi adificaverit, custodierit*, unless the *Lord consent*, (a word which onely implyeth his *will*) or unless the *Lord help*, which extendeth to any *kinde* of *assistance* (the *meanest* thing that concurreth to any *work*, being *causa adjuvans*, an *auxiliary cause*) but unless the *Lord build and keep*, which imply the *concurrence* of his *power*, as well as *will*, and that as the *principall* *agent* in the *building and keeping* : the *same* *assertion* is no *lesse* *true* in this *present* *case*, except the *Lord heale the patient*, the *Physitian* *administreth but in vaino*. *Heal thy self*, is only *true* of that *Physitian*, to whom it was *spoken* : no other *Physitian* can of himself either

Psal. 127.1.
Frustra est
omnibus humana
diligentia nisi
divina accedat
providentia.
Mus. ibid.

Id ibid.

Luke 4.23.

either heale himselfe or others. *Tangit te Rex, Sanat te Deus,* was no lesse truly than humbly spoken when the Royall touch was given, *The King toucheth thee, God cureth thee.* It is so here, the *Physitian* prescribes the *medicine*, but *God* by that commands *health*. Oh therefore that *Physitians* in *admini-
string*, *patients* in *receiving*, would onely depend upon, and sue for *divine Benediction*, when the one writes a *recipe* with his *pen*, let him *pray* with his *heart*; when the other receiveth the *portion* into his *stomach*, let him *lift up his eyes to God*, who *Ezod.15.26.* saith of himselfe, *I am the Lord that healeth thee.*

3. Art thou recovered? know whom to *praise*, and to whom to *ascribe* the *cure*: could the *ingredients* of thy *medi-
cine* speak, each would say of *health*, as the *depths* and the *Seas*, *Iob 28.14.* of *wisdom*, *It is not in me*: It is, I am sure, the *voice* of all *pious Physitians*, *non nobis, not to us (oh man) not to us, but to God be the praise of thy recovery.* And therefore whilst the *Atheist* looketh no further than *nature* and *art*, let the *Christian* look higher at *God* and his *blessing*: and as he must not forget that *respect* which is *due* to the *Physitian*, as the *Instrument*, so let the *chiefest* honour be given to *God* as being the *princi-
pall efficient*. The truth is, for the most part, such is our *foli-
fishesse*, that whilst we fix our *eyes* upon the *blessings* we receive, we turne our *backs* upon the *God* that bestoweth them, and we are more ready to *father* them upon *any other* than *him*, who is the *true donor* of them. Oh let not onely *gratitude* but *justice*, teach us to give *God* his *due*, when we gather the *fruit* let us *cast* downe our *eyes* on the *root* from which they sprout, when we *feed* upon the *acornes*, let us *lift* them up to the *tree* from whence they fall, and being *refreshed* by the *flowing streme*, let us *reflect* upon the *springing fountain*. Oh my *God*, it is in thee that I live, let me live to thee; from thee I have received *health*, to thee I returne *praise*; I have the *comfort*, take thou the *glory* of thy great *mercy*. And so I passe forward to the

2. *Excellency of the Benefit*, how expressed, in those words, *Had mercy on him.* l. 7.

In *mercy* there are two things considerable, *affectus*, and *effectus*, the *passion*, and the *action*, the inward *pity*, and the

Faciem quodam-
modo ponentes
ad ea quæ fecis-
torem ponimus
ad artificem qui
fecit.

Si quando nobis
prosperi aliquid
præier spem no-
stram & meri-
tum deus tribuit,
alius ascribit hoc
fortuna, alius
eventui, alius
confilio, nullus
deo.

Salv. de Cub.

owtward bounty, that is in the heart, this in the hand; that the bowels of mercy, this the works of mercy; that called by the Greekes ἐλεή, and this ἐλεημονία, and both these, though not in the same sense, are attributed to God, and here to be understood.

Misericordia nonnullis quod mi erum cor faciat.

Aug. contr. adv. leg. 1. 1. c. 20.

Misericors dicitur aliquis si qua miserum cor habens.

Aquin. par. prim. q. 21. art. 3.

Isa. 63. 9.

Ierem. 31. 20.

Psal. 103. 13.

Nobis non sibi loquitur, atque ideo nostris utitur in loquendo.

Hilari. in Ps. 126

μεγαλύτερον φέρει καὶ ἔλεος Καὶ τὸ συναλλάγμα

γνωστὸς παντὶ τῷ κορίτῃ τῆς σύμφορες. Greg.

Naz. Orat. 16.

Misericordia est alienæ miseriæ in condescensatio compatisse, qui unique (si possimus) jubuenire compellimus.

Aug. de civit. dei. 1. 9. c. 8.

1. In mercy there is a laying of anothers misery to heart, The Greeke word ἐλεία is derived from the Hebrew נָאַת which signifieth *Ejulare, plangere, to bewaile and lament: a condolency with our Brothers calamity, being a choice ingredient of mercy.* This is that which the *Holy Ghost asserteth of God in Scripture, where it is said, in all their afflictions he was afflicted: And againe, My bowels are troubled: And againe, Like as a Father pittyeth his Children, so the Lord pittyeth them that feare him: But withall, we must know, that in these Phrases the most high is pleased to descend, and speaking to men, to speak of himselfe, as if he were a man. There is not then any sorrow or compassion in him who is impassible, but by this is represented his good will towards his people, whereby he is propense to succour them. And because the afflicted person findes oft times much ease and solace in that sympathie, which another expresseth towards him, that we may know the like solace is to be found in God, this compassion is attributed to God; and indeed is, though not formally, yet equivalently, nay eminently verified of him. To bring this home, in that God is said to have mercy on dying Epaphroditus, it implyeth thus much, that God beholding and taking notice of, was as it were affected with his imminent danger, having after a sort a friendly pitty, and motherly yearning, or rather a fatherly good-will towards him. But this is not all that mercy includeth, and therefore know,*

2. In mercy there is an indeavour to relieve him whose misery it condoleth, as she suffereth with, so she doth for, and (according to her ability) either helpeth him to beare the burden by putting under her shoulder, or wholly easeth him of it by removing it from his shoulder. Hence the definition of mercy is well given to be such a compassion of anothers misery, as puts upon a cheerfull employing our power for the sustaining him under, and delivering him out of it. This is that which in

in a proper and genuine sense agreeeth to *God*, whose property is to deliver his out of their afflictions, and preserve them from destruction: and this no doubt, is that which our Apostle here especially intends in this expression, *God had mercy on him*, that is, he did remove his misery, and prevent his death by curing him of that sicknesse which had brought him nigh to it.

Let the same minde be in us that is in God: when our brethren are under sicknesse, or any other distresse, to have mercy on them. It was our blessed Saviours reasoning with the Pharisees, though not altogether to the same purpose, *which of you shall have an Ass or an Ox fall into the pit, and will not straightway pull him out? Surely one man is of more worth then many Asses; and shall we not, in what we may, succour him when fallen into some grievous sicknesse?*

That good *Samaritan* in the *Type* is no other than *Christ* in the *Truth*, who pityed and healed *man* when dangerously wounded by *sinne*, and as it was the *designe* of his *death* to cure mankinde of his *spirituall* sicknesse, so his *practise* in the course of his life to go about doing *good* and *healing*. If we call our selves *Christians*, whom should we imitate but *Christ*, by performing all *offices* of love to the *sick*, which lye within our *Spheare*? and if we have no *oyle* but that of *compassion*, no *wine* but *teares* and *prayers*, let them be *oured* into the *wounds* and *diseases* of thy *neighbour*; so shall we bee *Disciples of Christ*. But the *Text* leads us yet one *step* higher from *Christ*, as *man*, and as *God-man*, to *Christ* as *God*, acquainting us with *Gods mercy* to a *sick man*: and what more befitting *man* then to imitate *God* by practising this *God-like* worke of *mercy*. μέγα καὶ τιμιον ἀπὸ εἰσίμων, a mercifull

καὶ παρθεῖσσι, ταμεῖται ὁ χεῖσθε. Athanas. qu. 15. de parab. δὸς ἀντὶ μεγάλης περιθυμίας ἔι μηδὲν ἔχεις δάρευσον. Greg. Naz. Orat. 16. Αὐτῷ διδίκτεσθαι christiani; παντὶ τινὶ τοιούτῳ quod christus ambularet, τῷ νοῦ διβεβισθαι ambulare. Bern. Ser ad past. Pr. 20. 6. Sept. Virtus Magnus qui divini operis interpres est ut imitatur Amb. in Ps. 118. τὶ ἄλλον καὶ ἄλλη θεόν σε περισταλέσται γενέσθαι ὁ λόγος, οτονιὶ μορφωθεντα τῷ τοῦ θεότητος ιδείαματι. Greg. Nys. de Beat. Or. 5. γενέσθαι ἀτυχεῖται θεός τὸ ἄλλον θεοῦ μητροπλευρά. Greg. Naz. Orat. 16.

D 3

MAN

Eph. 6.1.

Luke 6.36

Nobilis dignius
quam ut hono-
rit auctor sui
imitator, & se-
cundum modum
propria faculta-
tis divisa sit ope-
ris executor.

Leo de quad.
Serm. 5.

Psal. 41.3

Prospicit paupe-
ri, agro, agroto,
attenuato.

Vatabl. ibid.

Improbus petitor,
qui quod alio
neq; at fibi postu-
lat. Homo effo-
rbi misericordia
forma, sic quomo-
do us, quantum
vix, quam cito
vix misericor-
diam tibi fieri,
tam cito alii,
tantum, taliter
ipse m: serere.

Chrysol. Serm.

43.

Mat. 15.7.

Vita mari est
familis, namque
ut mare vita
procellas: Hac
babet & venos
nausfragiumque
frequens.

Anth. sacr.

man is great and honourable, and that for this reason chiefly, because he is like to God, in which respect *Gregory Nyssen*, and *Nazianzen* call such a man a *God*, as having stamp'd upon him the *Character* of a *Deity*. Bee yee therefore followers of God as deare *Children*, is Saint Paul's counsell in generall, *Be you mercifull, as your Father also is mercifull*, so our blessed *Saviour* adviseth in speciall: and yet more particularly, as *God had mercy on sick Epaphroditus*, so let us on our sick neighbour, by visiting him, (if we can by our skill or counsell doe him good) however by compassionating him, and interceding with *God* in his behalfe.

And because this *duty* is that which (though so honourable) we are averse from; give me leave to carry it a little further, & let you see it is profitable, as well as honourable. Not only that you may follow *God* in *mercy*, but that you may upon the like occasion obtain *mercy* from *God*, shew *mercy* to others. It is a sweet promise to feed on in a time of sicknesse. *The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing, thou wilt make all his bed in his sicknesse*. That bed must needs be easie which *God maketh*, nor can he faint, whom *God strengtheneth*, but to whom is it made? him and none but him who considereth the poore, so our Translation, but the Hebrew word נִזְרָאָה may as well be rendered *sick*, one that is *weakned* by a *disease*: he who considereth others in their sicknesse, shall be supported by *God* in his. Which of us, beloved, doth not desire that *God* may shew that *mercy* to us in our *distresse*, which he did here to *Epaphroditus*? But how can we expect *God* should grant that to us, which we deny to others? *Blessed are the mercifull*, saith *Christ*, for they shall obtaine *mercy*: Be then oh man to thy selfe, a patterne of *mercy*, and shew with that *speed*, and in that *degree*, *mercy* to thy sick, weak, languishing neighbour, which thou wouldst have *God* vouchsafe to thee in the like condition. But a little more to unbowell this Clause.

The *mercy* here intended (as you have already heard) was the prolongation of *life*, and *restauration* of *health* to *Epaphroditus*: and here a double *question* falls in to be resolved,

How this can be called a mercy? And

If a mercy in it selfe, yet how a mercy to him?

Quest.

Qu. 1. It is a plausible *Objection* which is made, that *life prolonged* is no mercy, because it is a calamitous continuance in an evil world: what is this world but a *Coffer of Sorrows, Labyrinth of Troubles, Schoole of Vanity, Market of Fraud, Theater of Tragedyes, Floud of Teares, and Map of Ruines?* And can it be a favour for a man to continue long in a place of miseries? The earth we tread on, the aire we breath in, are as a *Sea*, wherein windes and *stormes* are ever blowing; and can it be a favour to be still tossed up and downe upon a *blustering tempestuous Sea?* Finally, this life is not a *life* but a *calamity*; yea, rather a *death* then a *life*, because so miserable: to live long is to be long tormented, and can this be a *mercy*?

Answ. To all this it is briefly, but fully answered. That though there be many *evils* in the *world*, yet the *world* is not *evil*, nor is it *evil* to abide in the *world*. These *miseries* are only *accidental* to *life*, and so hinder not, but that *preservation* from *death* is a *mercy*. And therefore the *Greek Fathers* upon this *Scripture* do hence most rationally confute the *Manichees*, who affirme the *world* in its owne nature to be *bad*, τι λέγεις ὁ ἀγέτης. so St. *Chrysostome*, ὁ μαρτυράτις. So *Theophilact* in particular. *What sayest thou to this, oh hereticall Manichee?* If the *world* be *wicked*, and the *life* which we now live in it, how doth the *Apostle* call this a *mercy of God*, that he *lengthened Epaphroditus* his *dayes*? The *other life* is *better* than this, surely then *this* must be *good*, an *immature death* is *threatned*, and *inflicted* as a *judgement*, surely then the *continuance of life* must be a *mercy*, as those forementioned *Fathers* excellently argue,

Life is a *mercy*, and yet *health* is a *greater mercy*. Λῶσον ὑγιαίνειν was written upon the porch of *Apollo's Temple*, *health* is the *Princesse* of *earthly blessings*: and *Plato* tells us that ἀεισον ὑγιαίνειν was *sung* by every one to his *Harpe* at the *Schooles*, and at *Festivals*. *Beauty, riches, health*, were the *three things Pythagoras* said should *chiefly be implored* of the *Gods*; but among them *health* the *chiefe*: indeed, it is that which maketh *life* it selfe to be a *mercy*, since *non est vivere sed valere vita*, *To live is not so much to breath, as to be well.*

Mercies then they are (especially) when conjoyned, and being so

ὑγιός ἀληθῶς
ὁ βίος, αλλα
σύμφορα.

Philem.
Tanta est tribu-
latio hujus miser-
ia viæ, ut nec
vita sit dicenda,
sed pati vix mors,
vel quæppiam
aliud morte
deterritum.

Idiot de pati.
Quid est diu-
vivere nisi diu-
torqueris.

*Aug. de verb.
dom. Serm. 17
Chryloft. 2 in
Theoph. 5 loc.
O. cum. 5*

καλὸν οὐ πα-
ρέστα ζωὴν
τὴν καθ' εαν-
τὸν. *Theoph.*

ibid.
Aristot. Eth. I.
I.c.8
Plat. in Gorg.
Mart. Ep. 70.
I. 6.

Una est catena
quæ nos alligatos
tenet, amor vita
qui us non est
abuiciendus, ita
miuendus est.
Sen. Ep. 27.

Corpus infra
animam est &
quævis anima
vitis excellens-
sive in corpore ex-
cellens invi-
nitur.

Aug in Pl. 145.

Chrys. in loc.
Mors porit finem
omnibus, malis in
hic vita, dat
terminum malis
in hoc seculo,
admit omnem
calmitatem.

Bern. de mod.
viv. Scim 30.

so in their ownē nature, ought so to be esteemed of by us : in which respect we ought to pray and give thanks for them as blessings. It is no lesse a fault to undervalue, then to over-prize our lives and health : this latter (I confesse) is the more common, but the former is no lesse culpable : we must not be so much in love with life as to dote upon it, because it is short, yet we may so farre love, as to desire, and endeavour that it may, yea, with the Apostle here, account it a mercy, when it is prolonged.

I end this, If deliverance from death be a mercy, how great a mercy is deliverance from hell ? If it be a blessing to have the danger of a mortall disease prevented, Oh what is it to have the guilt of our deadly sinnes pardoned ? Finally, if the health of the body be a favour, how choice a benefit is the soules health ? Surely by how much hell is worse then death, sin then sicknesse, yea, by how much the soule is better than the body, by so much is the one to be preferred before the other. Oh my soule, thou wast sick, desperately sick of sinne, so sick that thou wast not only nigh to death, but dead in sinnes, and trespasses ; but God had mercie on thee, he hath sent his Sonne to heale, to revive thee, by being himselfe wounded, nay, slain : and his spirit to cure, to quicken thee by killing thy sinne, and renewing thy nature. Thou art indebted to thy God for temporall, much more for spirituall : Blesse the Lord, oh my soule, for thy life of nature, health of thy body ; but let all that is within thee praise his holy name for thy life of grace, and eternall salvation.

Qu. 2. But it is further inquired, though this recoverie were a mercy in it selfe, yet how could it be so to Epaphroditus a godly man ? Had it been deliverance by death, this were a merey indeed ; but deliverance from death seemeth rather an injury than a courtesie, περι μὲν τὸν ὀρετικὸν ἔυκολον εἰ πεν περι
δε τὸν χεισιανὸν τὶ ἐργάμεν, we may easily refell the Heretick, but how shall we answer the Christians who desiring to be dissolved knoweth not how to esteeme the deferring his dissolution a mercy ? Had Epaphroditus been a wicked man, it had been a great mercy to spare him, that he might make his peace with God by the practice of faith and repentance ; but to him, whose peace was alreadie made, what advantage could the prolonging

longing of his life afford? Death it selfe to a good man is a deliverance, a *total*, finall deliverance from all sorrow and misery for ever: And can that be a deliverance, which keepeth off our deliverance? *per Augusta pervenitur ad augusta*, This red Sea leads to Canaan; through the valley of death we passe to the mount of glory: And can that be a mercy which retardeth our felicity? Is it a courtesie for a man to be detained from his wages, and held to labour? to be hindred from rest, and called to worke? to be withheld from his country, and wander in a wilderness? Finally, to be kept out of a Palace, and confined to a Prison? And yet, all this is true of a godly man, who when nigh to death, is called back againe to live longer in this world.

Answ. To answer this, though upon those forementioned considerations, it cannot be denied but that death is a mercy to a Saint; yet those hinder not, but that in other respects the continuance of life is a mercy, even to a godly man. As for that *κοινὴ συνέθεσις*, which the Greek Fathers speak of, as if Saint Pauls language were more according to custome than truth, and that when he calls *recovery* a mercy, he rather speaketh as men doe account, than as it is indeed, it seemes to me somewhat harsh, that to *ἡ κερδῶν Ψυχᾶς*, the opportunity of gaining more souls to God, which this preservation afforded him, is a farre more rationall solution. Upon this account it was Saint Paul looked upon the prolongation of his owne life as needfull: So he expresseth it in the former Chapter. And here, for the same reason, he calleth the *restauration* of Epaphroditus to health a mercy. To this purpose Saint Hieromes note upon the Text is very apposite, *Misertus est ejus ut majorem docendo colligat fructum*, God had mercy on him, that he, being a Minister, might by the preaching of the Gospel, gather in more souls, and doe more good.

Obj. But you will say, this seemes not to be a full Answer: Indeed, had the Apostle said, but God had mercy on you, namely the Philippians, this would be very suitable; the recovery of a faithfull Minister is, no doubt, a mercy to the People; but still it remaineth a doubt, how the Apostle could say, as here he doth, *God had mercy on him*, to wit, Epaphroditus.

*Motitur quidem
iustus sed securus,
quippe cu-
jus mors ut
praevisus exitus
est vita, ita in-
troitum meliorum.
id. Ep. 105.
Eris ianua vita,
initium refri-
gerii erit, sancta
illius mens
scala & ingres-
sus in locum
tabernaculi.
Id. in serm.*

*Chryloft. in
Theoph. J loc*

*Chryloft. ibid.
Ἐλασσον λόγοις
τὴν ἐγκαίνησα
ζῶντος Καὶ φά-
ντον ὅτι διὰ ἣν
αἰτιαὶ ἀγωνί-
τεσσιν δὲ τὸ
ἐπιμένειν εἰ
τὴν σαρκὶ δι'
ὑμᾶς. Oecu.
in Loc.*

*Phil. 1. 24.
Hieron. in loc.*

Repl. To which I reply, That the opportunity of this service was not onely a benefit to the Church, but a mercy to him, in as much as by this meanes.

Considerandum est non esse parvum dignationem quam se Deus in nobis glorificat. Calvin. lo.

Phil. 1.20.

Qui Christo vivunt, faticiter in spiritu glorie celestis exercentur. Calv. ibid. Dan. 12.2.

Act. 20.35.

1. He became a greater instrument of Gods glory; It is on high honour, which God vouchsafeth to that man, whom he makes use of to serve and honour him; and to a pious soule nothing is dearer than Gods glory, desiring rather to glorify God than to be glorified with him: this Saint Paul declares to his hope, yea, his earnest expectation, that Christ might be magnified in his body whether by life or death. No wonder then, if considering how much Epaphroditus his life might conduce to Gods glory, he reckoned it as a mercy. Besides,

2. He increased his owne reward; the longer a good man, especially a good Minister liveth, the more sinners he converteth, and they that turne many to righteousness, saith Daniel, shall shine as the starres for ever and ever, nay, every soule that a faithfull Minister winnes to God, is as a new gemme added to that Crown, which shall one day be put upon his head.

Thus then the case stands; Epaphroditus indeed, by dying, had received his reward, but by living he did the more service; by dying he had obtained glory from God, but by living he brought glory to God: and our blessed Saviour saith, It is a more blessed thing to give than to receive; by dying he had enjoyed his recompence sooner, by living he made it greater, that would have accelerated, but this augmented it, so that even in respect of his owne future happiness he was no loser but a gainer by the prolonging of his life, and therefore most justly doth Saint Paul say, God had mercy on him.

Briefly, and yet clearly to state the whole matter.

Life and death may be considered and compared four ways,

1. In their formall nature, and so death is a privation, life a possession of good; and therefore death evil, and life good,

2. In their Causes, death is a fruit of sin, life an effect of love; our wickednesse deserved the one, Gods goodnessse conferreth the other; in which respect, death is threatened as a punishment, life promised as a reward.

3. In their naturall and proper effects, death bereaueth as well

well godly, as wicked men of the society of friends, possession of their estates, yea, all the comforts which this world affords, whereas by life we have the fruition of them continued to us, so that in this regard also, life is farre better than death, even to a good man.

4. Lastly, in their accidentall consequents, when a wicked man dyeth there followeth torment, but whilst he liveth there is hope of his repentance, yea, many times it so falls out, some come into the Vineyard at the eleaventh hour, and to such life is a choice mercy indeed: when a godly man dyeth he is carried into Abrahams bosome, placed in a state of blisse; but by living longer he honoureth God, edifieth the Church, worketh out his salvation; he gaineth both the more time to prepare himselfe for, get assurance of, yea, make an addition to his future glory, and therefore in this likewise, and so in all comparisons life hath the preheminence, and the continuance of it is justly called by the Apostle a mercy.

To close up this, life continued, health restored, are mercies; oh let not us by abusing them to sinne turne them into judgement, who can believe it? and yet we may often see it, men change blessings into curses by their iniquities, and as *Parisenis* excellently expresseth it, *Ipsa beneficia sibi faciunt pena-
lia & instrumenta contra seipso divinae justitiae*. They make benefits to become punishments, and the fruities of Gods merey instruments of his justice. The truth is, it was not so much life as the right use, Saint *Paul* conceived *Epaphroditus* would make of his life, which moved him to call it a mercy, *Multis periculo & postulens sanitas fuit qui tutius agrotassent*: Indeed these things are good or evill to us according as we employ them. It had been a greater mercy to many impenitent sinners that they had continued sick, or dyed, then that they were recovered. Let us therefore lay out our life, our health, according to our severall places, in Gods service, so shall it prove glory to God, benefit to others, and a mercy to us: Oh my soule, thou hast received, as it were, a new life, improve it in new obedience; health is restored to thy body, employ it in the service of thy God: why should thy honey be turned into gall, thy shield into a sword, thy delicates into poyson? Oh let thy life be expended by thee, as it was intended

Quis hoc credet.
re quaer, misera-
mus naturam
rerum iniiquita-
tibus nostris,
Gre. Salv. de
Gub. l.6.
Paris. de Uni-
verso prim.
Part. pars
tertia. c.9.
Perrach dial.
de valer. corp.
Est perniciosa
sanitas qua ad
inobedientiam
ducit.
Bern. de inter-
dom.

by God; so shalt thou have cause to take up the Apostles language, God had mercy on me. And thus much shall suffice for the second particular, I hasten to the

3. Opportunity of the time, which is the last branch implied in the exceptive *But*. And a comfortable *But* it is; indeed, the sicknesse, like a floud was carrying him away, God puts in a *But*, and stops its current; *Epaphroditus* was falling into the pit, *But* God reacbeth forth an hand to uphold him. God doth not so preserve him that the sicknesse should not come, nay, when it is come he doth not hinder it from increasing, but when it is come to the height, then he rebuketh the disease, and saith, *hitherto thou shalt come and no further*. All hopes of his recovery in mans eyes are perished, and lo, he is raised by the hand of God. Means either are not afforded, or however unable to help. God becommeth his *Physitian*, and commandeth the cure. It lets us see thus much, that

Jo. 5.7.
En horam tuam
domine, ades
enim deus cui
homo deest.
Velasq. in
Phil.

Herodes gentis
iudaeae invaserat
regnum, libertatem
sustulit,
prophanavit
sanctae; quicquid
culsum est, abole-
vit, merito ergo
geni sancta quia
humana desunt,
divina susur-
rent.

Chrisol. serm.
116.

When all hopes are livelesse, and helps seem fruitlesse, then is the season of Gods deliverance. That childs condition is very sad, whom the father and mother forsake; but then the *Psalmist* finds God ready to take him up: And the *causall* particle in the Originall is very considerable, not onely when, but because he was as a forsaken babe, God vouchsafeth to protect and provide for him; our extremity being not onely the opportunity when, but a motive why God will deliver. It was a dolefull complaint which the poore Creeple made to *Christ*, ἀρρωτοῦ ἐν ἔχω, I have not a man to put me into the poole, but even that narration is an efficacious prayer; The absence of mans help, being the season of Christs presence and succour. Saint Paul speaking of our blessed Saviours Incarnation, saith, it was when the fulnesse of time came; if you will know when that full time was, the *Evangelist* answereth, it was in the dayes of Herod the King: and if with *Chrysologus* you looke into thofe dayes, you shall find them dayes of extreame misery to the *Jewis* Nation, their Temple profaned, Liberty suppressed, Worship abolished, and the whole State full of confusion. In those dayes was the fulnesse, because indeed the fitnesse of time come for him, who was the *Redeemer*, to appeare, and the horne of salvation to be raised up. In which respect the *Messiah* is called by *Moses* a fit

fit man, or according to the Originall, a man of opportunity.

Thy way oh God is in the sea, and thy paths in the great waters, Psal. 77. 19.

saith the Psalmist. By which expressions no doubt he chiefly intends (as appears by what followeth) to note the imperceptible secercie attending upon many of Gods dispensations, so that we can no more discerne the reason of them, than we can any impression of a ships passage in the Sea, but yet withall it is not an improbable allusion to understand Sea and great waters representing doleful and perillous distresses: Gods usual course being to manifest himself not in the shallow river of a slight trouble, but the deep sea of some desperate calamity. The Disciples enter into a ship, but Christ comes not, the sable mantle of the night covers them, and Christ cometh not, the winde bloweth, the stome rageth, the waves arise, and yet Christ appeareth not, but when they have rowed 25. or 30. furlongs, being farre from

Ioh. 6. 19.

land, and in the depth of danger, then they see Jesus walking on the Sea, and drawing nigh to the ship to succour them. To this purpose is S. Cyrills observation upon this storie, Christ doth not presently at the beginning of the stome appear to his Disciples, but when they had rowed far from land. Christ is not alwayes at hand upon the first onset, but when through prevailing fear, & almost over-whelming danger, our spirits begin to fail, then he breaks forth as it were in the midst of the waves, calming the stome, expelling our feare, and preventing our ruine.

ἐπιτίγησεν οὐ περιλέγεται σὺν ἡδεῖ εὐ αἴσχυνταν κανδύγειν τοῖς χεισθεῖσιν οὐδελατεῖται. Cy.

It is very observable in that hundred and seventh Psalme, when the Prophet celebrateth Gods goodnessse to severall sorts

Alex. in.

of men in their dangers, that their deliverance was not vouchsafed till their danger appeared remediless: of travellers it is said, they wandered so long in the wildernes, till by reason of hunger and thirst their soule fainted in them, and then, not till then upon their crying the Lord delivered them; The Captives are said to sit in darknesse and the shadow of death, by reason of their bonds, yea, to fall downe and none to help them, and then this want of help obtaineth help, at their earnest cry God saveth them out of their distress; when sick, men are brought so low that their soule abhorreth all manner of meat, and they draw nigh to the gates of death, then God sendeth his Word and healeth them: finally, the Seaman's soule is melted because of trouble, they reele

Psal. 107. 3,

4. 5.

οὐδὲ χωρε-

μόδις τῆς δυ-

ραυσεως ἐγε-

ρείν βούδεια.

Greg. Nyss.

Tract in Ps.

ver. 10, 12, 13.

ver. 18, 20.

Ver. 16. 17, 18,
29.

to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, yea, are at their wits end, not knowing what course to take, ere God begins to make the storne a calme, and so bringeth them out of their distress. Thus God, as he can, so usually he doth help at a pinch, when Jacob wants bread at home, Joseph is heard of abroad: when the Prodigall wants abroad, he is minded of going home; and when we looke with David on the right hand, and there is no man, yea, on the left hand, nay round about us, and all refuge faileth us,

Psal. 142. 8, 9.

Restat iter cælo,
we may looke up to God, and God is ready to looke downe from heaven and help us.

And now if you shall inquire why God is pleased to call out such a time of succour, when in extreme perill, of curing, when sick nigh to death: I answer, it is both in reference to himselfe and us.

In regard of himself,

1. Partly that it may appeare to be his worke, Those effects in the production of which, God is as it were *causa socia* a copartner, making use of probable meanes, too often the instrument is more looked upon than God; but those effects wherein he is *causa solitaria*, the sole agent (effecting them as it were by his owne hand) enforce men to acknowledge it is his doing. *Quando humana omnem spem negant, tunc divina dispensatio clare fulget,* In the day-time, when other starres appeare not, we know the light which shines is onely from the Sun; so when secundary meanes succeed not to whom but God can the patient ascribe his recovery? and for this reason, *ne opus cœlestis dextra assignaretur virtuti humana*, that the creature may not rob him of his glory, he chuseth that time to deliver when the creature can afford no succour.

Velasq. in Phil.
Permitit deus
crescere pericula
us periclitanti-
um merita aug-
eantur: extreme
autem pericli-
tantiibus opem
firat suam po-
tentiam demon-
strat. Mend in
lib. 1. Reg. cap.
2. n. 6.

Psal 17. 7.
Gavuds wrov
ta ēān ov.
Sept. Misericordia
misericordias
was. Vulg.

2. Chiefly, that in such works he may appear to be a God, in as much as his Almighty power and mercy, hereby become illustrious: it is the prayer of David, shew thy marvailous loving kindenesse; the Septuagint and vulgar (agreeing in this with the Hebrew) render it, make thy mercyes wonderfull, and surely when our misery is most dolefull, Gods mercy is most wonderfull, and therefore, saith Saint Gregory, we most admire Gods benignity,

brutality, when we call to minde our calamity: indeed God bringeth us nigh to death, that we may know our selves how fruile and mortall we are, that he may know us, or rather make knowne to us and others our graces, and when we are nigh to death he hath mercy, that we may know him, not onely speculatively, but experimentally, how great and mighty, how good and gracious he is: The truth is, *Omnipotenti medico, nullum vulnerum infanabile, No wound is incurable to this omnipotent Physician*: and that he may appeare to be so, he often deferreth the cure till humane skill and helpe faileth. In such deliverances, the characters of Gods almighty goodnesse are plainly written so, that the blind Egyptians can read them; and therefore seeing the *Israelites* escape an imminent danger they acknowledge the *Lord* fighteth for them. *Exod: 14:29*:

In respect of us, that the deliverance may be the more acceptable to us, as well as honourable to him, To every thing, saith Solomon, there is a season, and indeed it is the season that putteth a beauty upon every thing; in this regard, that of the Prophet *quam speciosi*, how beautifull are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, is rendered by *Tertullian*, *quam tempestivi*, *λοροιας τελεων*, that which is seasonable being ever beautifull; *μηνιον δρα* indeed in every opportune mercy there is a double beauty, the one in the thing conferred, the other in the time of conferring it. It is the prayer of the Church to God, *Gird thy sword upon thy thigh with thy glorie and thy majesty*, which latter words the vulgar tongue reads *cum specie tua & pulchritudine tua*, that is to say, with thy beauty and thy beauty: and this is then most fully verified, when God girds his sword to defend his Church in her lowest misery, and offend his enemies in their highest insolency. It is a sweet and choice expression of the Prophet, *The Lord will wait that he may be gracious*, which though it be chiefly intended of his forbearing judgement, yet it is no lesse true of his withholding mercy: God therefore oft times delaying, that he may appeare the more gracious in bestowing deliverance; so true is that of the Father, *Datus cum differt non negat sed committit aliam*; God in suspending intends not to deny, but onely to command his mercy. *Abrahams childe was more welcome at sovereyn, than if he had been given at thirty, and the same*

Tunc nolis misericordia dei mirificatur cum nobis ad memoriam misericordie nostra revocantur. Greg. hom. 18. in Ez: 28. N. b. l. exiit quod Dei pot. n. siam vineat, nibil quod omnipotenti illi nutui obfistere voleat. Sophr. Arch. hom. in Bible pat.

τι τέτης θαυμαστορεγον ἡ μέσην την προσεύχεται μεγάλη μεταμεταστροφή. Greg. Naz. Ocat 32. Isa. 52. 7. Tertul. contra. Mar. 1. 3.c 2. Psal 45.3. Isa.30.18. την γαρ οὐτα την χρειστάτην τοις κυριούσιν επιδέρατι την σωτηρίαν ταῖς αὐλοῖς. την ἐπι το.

Isaac.

ζῆν εἰπίδε
περαπολεμέν-
το εἰδη το
φίδε. Cyr.
Alex. in Joh.
6. 19.

Erasm. simil.

Phil. 3. 1.
Flor. 1. 4. c. 8.

Ιustus semper
Iperat & in ad-
versis positius &
frequentibus
afflictus eruntur
et spera non
novit.

Ambr. in Pl.
11. Oct. 19.
διαν εἰς δι-
ειν τὰ
περγυματα
επιτόν τότε
μαλισκα εἰπι-
ζε. &c.

Chrys. in
Psal. 117.

Ezek. 3. 16.

Isaac had not beene so precious, had he not beene as miracu-
lously restored as given. In fine, the language of a depopulating
warre is the best rhetorick to extoll the blessing of peace, how
welcome is a calme to the Marriner after a blustering storme?
and health is never so amiable, as when it brings letters of com-
mendation from a long and dangerous sicknesse.

To apply this, It is a meditation which should encourage us
to trust in God, even when things are at the worst, and though
all other succours faile, not to let goe our hold of him : As
Apelles striving to paint a drop of foam falling from a Horses
mouth, after long study, despairing, let his pencill fall, and that
fall did it, *Quod assequi non potuit casus expressit*, effecting by
chance what he could not by art, and when both nature and
art can goe no further, divine providence undertaketh, nay,
effecteth the worke, and therefore, as the Apostle saith of joy,
I say of hope, *hope always in the Lord*, indeed, *magna indolis est*
Sperare semper, it is an argument of an heroick minde, to hope
always, and of a pious minde to place that hope on God ;
David saith of himselfe, *I have hoped in thy word*, the Septua-
gint read it *επίλπισα*, and the vulgar Latine accordingly *super-
speravi*, which as S. Ambrose interpreteth it, is *ad sperandum sem-
per crescere & spem spei adjungere*, to add hope to hope, & that even
then when affliction is added to affliction : Excellent to this pur-
pose is that counsele of the Greeke Father, *When extornall means*
are least, let thy confidence be greatest, for then God displayeth his
power most, not at the beginning, but when things are desperate,
for this is the season of divine help. It is our great fault that
in dismall dangers we open the eye of sense, and onely pore upou
the extremity of the trouble, whereas it becometh a Saint, even
then to open the eye of faith, and looke upon the energy of Gods
power.

And to carry it one step further, Let even the depth of misery
be an encouragement to our confidence, in as much as that is
a time of deliverance : when the night is at the darkest, we
know day-break is nearest, the lownesse of the ebbe argueth the
flowing in of the tide to be at hand : so may we conclude divine
succour approaching from the premisses of a grievous calamity
encompassing. We read in the vision of the wheel, which Ezekiel
saw

saw there was a wheele in the middest of a wheele, by which two wheeles Justin Martyr understandeth the Jewes captivity in Babylon, and their restitutio[n] to their owne Country, and one wheele is said to be in the middest of the other, as if their returne were ingraven in their very bondage, whilst the one gave hope of the other. Strange, but yet comfortable is the Promise, which God maketh to his Church, *I will give her the valley of Achor for a doore of hope.* Achor signifieth confusion, perturbation; and yet this will God make, a doore of hope, whilst that perturbation proveth but a sad Prologue to a joyfull restoration. Strange, but yet strong was the faith which the Psalmist expresseth, where he saith, *Though an hoste should encamp against me, my heart shall not feare, though warre should rise against me, in this will I be confident:* Loe here, a soule like the ark rising with the waters, the encamping of an hoste is terrible, and yet David feareth not: the rising up of warre is yet more dangerous; and David will not onely not feare, but be confident: Nor yet (which is very observable) doth he say in God, but in this, that is the very warre it selfe will I be confident, as knowing, that when the enemy did not onely encamp about, but warre against him (so that either he must perish, or God must help) it would not be long ere the wisdome of the Almighty would finde out a way to rescue him. Not much unlike this, is that resolution of holy Job, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;* death and hope seeme to be at the greatest distance, and yet here they are brought together: death could not kill Job's hope, nay, according to Pagnines reading of the Hebrew text, *Ecce occidet me, behold he will slay me; death it selfe giveth life to his hope, and becometh a prop for his confidence.*

Let this be our practise at least, indeavouring to attaine this high pitch of faith and dependance on God. True it is, if we behold the fad condition of this Church at this day, we shall find many dying Symtomes upon it; Heresie hath poisoned it, Sarrelidge starved it, Schisme wounded it, yea, a licentious reulation almost strangled it: And I doubt not but the people of God mourne in secret for these abominations; and yet (to use Saint Paul's expressions on another occasion) *Let us not sorrow as*

σείρυσι τῷ
τερροῦ
τερροῦ μητρό-
ον δι αὐτῷ
τὸν τὸν ι-
δαῖον ἀτα-
γγῆλον εἰς
αἰχμαλωστὴν
καὶ ἀταγγῆλον
εἰς ταῦτα.

Justin. Mart.

qu.44.

Ibi opera est
Ihes ubi fuerat
desperatio.

Hier. ibid.

Hos. 2. 15.

Psal. 27. 3.

Si surrexerit su-
per me bellum, in
illud ego spera-
bo. Sic legit.

Cypr. de exort.

Mart.

Job 6: 17: 15

Job sit gravata
incommodiorum
queritatisibus pio
spiritu cumulatus
afflatus.

Ambr. in Psal.
118.

1 Thes. 4. 13.

John 11.4:

without hope, that this sicknesse of our Church (like that of Lazarus) shall not be to death, but to the glory of God, when the set time to have mercy upon Sion shall come. Againe, it cannot be denied (oh that it were more lamented) our land is desolate, and nigh to ruine, the whole head is sick, and the heart is faint, from the soale of the foot even to the head there is no soundnesse in it, but wounds and bruisers, and purifying sores; and yet there is hope in this matter, *confidat qui agit paenitentiam, quia erit tempus salvandi.* Let all penitent mourners believe, and expect a day of salvation: Finally, none of us but may at some time or other be brought low, and in this particular of the text, be sick nigh to death: Oh let us treasure up this truth, as a cordiall against that evill day, and learne, even in our fainting fits, to encourage our selves in the Lord our God.

And because examples are great encouragements as well of faith as obedience, since as we are incited to doe what others have done, so we are animated to hope what others have experienced before us: give me leave to mind you of several instances in the book of God, which evidence the truth of this comfortable assertion.

Were not Hagar and her Sonne in a perishing estate, when turned out of Abrahams house into a dry wilderness, onely with a little bread, and a bottle of water, nay, when the bottle was empty and none to replenish? Now it is that Hagar giveth her selfe, and her childe, for lost, leaving him under a bush, that she might not heare him cry, nor see his death, and resolving to spend the little remainder of her owne dayes in teares. But loe, when at this pinch an Angel appeareth, openeth her eyes, and instead of a bottle she hath a well full of water for her owne and her Sons preseruation.

Was not Isaac nigh to death, when bound hand and foot, yea, laid upon the Altar? nay, his Fathers hand stretched forth to take his knife and cut his throat; it is but a little while, and one stroake had let out blood and life together. But see, in the mount of the Lord it is seene, *Exodus 3:14* *Si unnam, God,* as it were from an ambush, calls unexpectedly from Heaven, and by a word in season at once stops the Fathers hand, and saves the Childes life.

In what great danger of death was Moses, when his parents laid

Hier. in Pl. 10.
Constituit in
extremo periculo
deus succurrerit
memorabili bo-
nitate exempli,
quo nos in famili
discrimine positi
erigamus, scien-
zes Deum non
defuturum no-
stris necessitati-
bus, etiam in
solitudine, mode-
stum cum precibus
confugiamus.

Par. in loc.

a Sam. 30.2.

Gen. 21.15, 16.

Hoc apud He-
breos exiuit in
proverbiis: ut
si quando in
angustia consti-
tuitur *Exodus 3:14*
Domini operant-
ur nos, et
auxilio sublevari
dicent in monte,

Dominum vide-
bit, hoc est factum
Abra. et miser-
ium est miserebi-
tur *Exodus 3:14*.

Hieron. in
quest. Hebr.

Gen. 22.14.

Exod. 2.3.

laid him by the rivers brinke with no other shelter but an arke of bulrushes: how likely is this helpless Babe to be starved with cold, or tumble into the river, or be devoured with a wild beast? But behold, whilst the childe is in this imminent danger, and the parents in perplexing feare, providence so ordereth it, that Pharaoh's daughter becometh as a mother to the child, and the childe's mother is appointed to be his nurse, whereby his life is preserved.

How nigh in all probability was the Israelites destruction, when before them a Sea, through which there could be no wading, on either side mountaines, over which there was no climbing, behinde them a mighty hoste, with whom there is no contesting, and yet from whom no meanes left of escaping: But loe, in this depth of misery God hath mercy on them, even to a miracle; the sea divideth, and at once becometh the Israelites passage, and Egyptians grave.

How small did the distance seeme betweene Jonah and death, when the mercifull marriners were enforced for saving their owne lives to cast him into the mercilesse Sea, and yet there he striketh not, a divine hand as it were holding him by the chinne, when in the Sea swallowed by a greedy whale, and there he dyeth not; God would not deliver him from the tempest, he will from the whale; that which was most likely to consume him becometh the means to preserve him, within three dayes the whale delivereth him safe, whole, and alive upon dry ground.

Who ever thought to have seene those three worthies alive after they fell downe bound into the midst of a fiery burning furnace? But behold a martyrdome effected without dying, whilst a fourth like the Sonne of God appereith, at whose command the fire forgetteth to burne, or so much as scorch.

Who did not expect but that Daniel being cast into a denne of ravenous Lyons, should be devoured before the next morning, nay, the next houre? But see, the Lyons mouthes are stopped by an Angel, and since they cannot feed Daniel, are forced to keep a fast with him.

Were not Paul and his company in great jeopardy of death, when the thick clouds had for many dayes obscured the light of

Quid mirabilis
us contingere
potuit illa, que
cum dolore puerum exposuerat,
nunc cum gaudio
cum recipit.

Fer. Com.

Exod. 2.

Exod. 14:21.

Aque qua timi-
banuus dextrā
levi⁹; famul⁹
dei murua effe-
ct⁹, non solum
perniciem nesci-
unt, sed & mu-
nimen exhibent.

Orig. hom. in
Exod.

Patien⁹ et suffi-
xuit absorbit⁹
Jonam à ceto
non ut absorbe-
retur & in
totum periret, sed
ut evanesceret
magis subigeretur
Deo, et plus
glorificaret deum
qui insperabi-
lem salutem ei
donisset.

Ian. adv. hær.

1.3 c. 22.

O martyrium &
sine passione per-
fictum, satis passi-
onis excusis

sunt, quos prop-
terea D. u. texit,

ne potestatem
eius mensiri vi-
derentur Tertul.

Scop. cap. 8.

Venit Leo &

Sun. I. bravit Ieonem

ab ore koris:
Rab. in Lap.
super loc.

"Ο γον καλα
την φύσιν τη
περιγματο
απωλοντο

αν αλλ' ο θε
ος εκάλυπτε.

Chrys. in Act.
Quod genus
morbi & natura
vires atque
prospera esset
mortuorum nisi
singulari dei
consilio servare-
tur. Musc. in
loc.

Solo iussu salutis
reddidit qui vo-
luntate omnia
creavit. Greg.
Mag. in Evan.
hom. 28.

Post certamina
desperata medi-
corum: post medi-
camina sumpu-
osa, post inanem
& exiguissimam
curam ubi ars et
peritia dese erat
jam curantium
abi languoris
omnis: jam con-
sumpta fuerat
substantia ipsi
auctoris reveren-
dum undus non
casu sed divini-
tus occurrit, ut
quod humana
arie: et annis
curari non posse-

Sun and Starres from them, the violent stormes exceedingly
tossed the Ship, enforced them to cast out the goods, yea, every
moment they expect themselves to be made a prey to the roaring
waves, all hope that they should be saved being taken away? but
behold, that night an Angell of God standeth by Paul, and from
God assures him of his and their preservation.

To come yet nearer to the instance of the Text:

It was no slight sicknesse afflicted David, when he said, *My
heart panteth, my strength faileth me; as for the light of mine
eyes it is gone from me; the disease (it seemeth) had seized upon
all his spirits, his animals in the dimnesse of his eyes, his natu-
rall in the failing of his strength, his vitall in the panting of his
heart; and surely then it must needes bring him very nigh to
death; yea, it seemeth David feared it, which made him so ear-
nestly pray against it in another Psalm: But when death is near,
God is neare too, hearing his prayer, and preserving his life.*

It is said of Hezekiah, that he was sick unto death, the disease
was such that he reckoned his bones shoule be broken, and an end
made of him, yea, he received a sentence of death from God by
the Prophet, *Set thine house in order, for thou shalt dye and not
live: But that threat was onely like Abrahams precept, not a
declaration of what God intended to doe, but onely a probation
to try what Hezekiah would doe; and therefore notwithstanding
the disease was deadly, God becometh his Physician, pres-
cribeth a plaster of figgs, and Hezekiah is healed.*

The Centurions Sonne is visited with a Feaver; that Fea-
ver bringeth him to the very point of death, when as at the
Centurions intreaty, Christ with a word commands his recov-
ery.

That womans condition was desperat, when she was at once
brought low in estate and body: her goods are gone, her disease
continmeth, the Physicians have empysed her purse, but cannot
stay her flux, nor is there any likelyhood but that this sicknesse
will at length bring her to her grave. But her deplorable state
is a fit occasion for Christ to magnifie his mercy, whilst by a
believing touch of his garment he maketh her perfectly whole.

Finally, Martha sends Christ word that Lazarus is sick; Christ delayeth to come, onely lets her know this sicknesse should
be

be for Gods glory: being sick he dyeth, dying is buried, and having been some dayes buried he rotteth, nay stinketh in the grave; and now is the time come for Christ by his powerfull voice to raise him from the sleep of death; and bed of the grave.

Loe here, more than a fury of textuall witnesses, to which many more might be added (besides this in the Text) all asserting this truth, and thereby assuring our faith of Gods deliverance in the worst extremity. To all which give me leave to add one more, even my owne late experience of Gods marvailous kindenesse vouchsafed to me.

It is not many weekes agoe since it pleased the wise God to visit me with a sore and violent Feaver; that Feaver so exhausted my spirits, and enervated my body, that I might well take up Davids expression, *There was but a step betweene me and death:* Much about that time when the dayes of the yeare are at the longest, the dayes of my life seemed to be at the shortest. Thus was the first part of this Text verified, I was sick nigh to death, indeed so nigh, that I was as a dead man in the opinion of the learned, yea, actually dead and buried in the report of the vulgar, and truly I had ere this beene not onely fourre dayes with Lazarus, but more than four weeks putrifying in the grave, had not divine goodness prevented: But God had mercy on me, and so the other part of my Text is likewise fulfilled: when the sicknesse had almost weighed me downe into the pit, God was pleased to putt a graine of mercy and turne the scale, so that I am here (beloved) this day, before God, Angels, and men, as a bird escaped out of a strong snare, as a prey plucked out of the jawes of a devouring Lion, as a brand snatched out of the fire of a burning feaver.

What therefore remaineth, but that as in the beginning, so now in the close of this discourse I take up a gratulation, *Bless the Lord oh my soul, and let all that is within me praise his holy name;* when I forget to mention this deliverance, let my right hand forget its cunning; when I cease (as opportunity offereth it selfe) to publish this mercy, let my tongue cleave to the roofe of my mouth; nor yet would I be alone, in this work of praise; do you (all you here present) joyne with me. I doubt not but many, the most, nay

it, sole fide &
humilitate cura
retur. Chrysol.

Serm. 33.

videlicet quem.

admodum dat

locum morti,

liceniam dat

sepulcro, sor-

ruptioni posse

permittit, negat

nil putatini, nil

fætori: atque

ut Tartarus

rapiat, irabat,

habeat, admittit,

atque agit, ut

humana spes

tota perire, et

tota v'la morta-

na desperatio-

accedit, quatenus

quod facturus

est divinum sit,

non humanum.

Chrysol. serm.

63.

a Sam 20.3.

From the 10. my
disease was at
the highest.

Psal. 103.1.

137. 5,6.

2 Cor. 1.11.

Psal. 72. 18, 19.

nay all of you in some kinde, at some time or other, have had experience of eminent deliverances: oh call them now to mind, & let your gratesfull remembrance come up as a memoriall before the Lord: I doubt not but many of you, yea, very many, did put up prayers, fervent prayers at the throne of grace for this mercy (which I now celebrate,) my recovery. Indeed brother, I look upon my health, as S. Paul on his preservation, as a gift bestowed on me by the meanes (to wit, for the sakes and prayers) of many; and surely as prayers have been made, so fit it is thanksgiving should be returned by many on my behalfe, it were a shame to be zealous in begging and cold in blessing; to cry aloud give us our dayly bread, and onely whisper hallowed be thy name. Blessed therefore be the Lord God of his unworthy servant, who alone doth wondrous things; yea, blessed be his glorious name for ever, and let all that have beene prisoners for me say with me at least in their hearts, Amen, Amen.

And now my Dearly beloved Parishioners, and freinds in the Lord, what is my desire, but that you may have cause in allusion to the following words of this verse, to say, God had mercy, not on him onely, but us also; that my preservation may be for your edification, as well for my consolation: that you, who have already found benefit by my weak Ministry, may be more strengthened; and those, who have heretofore been unprofitable, may now be bettered. Which that it may be so, it shall be my endeavour, let it be your prayer for me, that I may doe the works of Christ more diligently and faithfully than ever; it shall be my prayer for you, let it be your endeavour to heare the words of Christ more attentively and obediently for the time to come. So shall you have cause to blesse God for me, and I to blesse God for you. Yea at that last and great day you shall have joy in me, if my preaching become a meane of your conversion and salvation; and I shall have joy in you, whose conversion and salvation shall prove an increase of my reward, and an addition to my glorie. Which God grant, &c.

E. I. N. I. S.